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have been expected, but if the extreme rigour of the law had been enforced the Empire would have been turned into a shambles. The fact is, as we have said, that very much depended upon the personal character of the Governors and the local magistrates. In some places altars were put up in the law courts and no one was allowed either to bring or defend a suit without offering sacrifice. In other towns they were erected in the market squares and by the side of the public fountains, so that one could neither buy nor sell, nor even draw water, without being challenged to do homage to the gods. Some Governors, such as Datianus in Spain, Theotecnus in Galatia, Urbanus of Palestine, and Hierocles of Bithynia and Egypt, were noted for the ferocity with which they carried out the edicts; others — and, when the evidence is carefully examined, the humane judges seem to have formed the majority — presided with reluctance at these lamentable trials. Many exhausted every means in their power to convert the prisoners back to the old religion, partly from motives of humanity, and partly, no doubt, because their success in this respect gained them the notice and favour of their superiors.

We hear of magistrates who ordered the attendants of the court to place by force a few grains of incense in the hands of the prisoner and make him sprinkle it upon the altar, or to thrust into his mouth a portion of the sacrificial meat. The victim would protest against his involuntary defilement, but the magistrate would declare that the offering had been made. Often, the judge sought to bribe